

REMARKS

Claim 27 has been amended and claims 31-37 have been canceled. As such, claims 17, 18, and 20-30 are currently pending in the case. Further examination and reconsideration of the presently claimed application are respectfully requested.

Allowed Claims:

Claims 17, 18, and 20-22 were allowed. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's allowance of these claims and eagerly awaits formal allowance of the remaining claims.

Objections to the Claims:

Claim 27 was objected to for an informality. The Examiner's thorough review of the claims is appreciated. As noted above, claim 27 has been amended in a manner commensurate with the suggestion made in the Office Action. Accordingly, removal of the objection to claim 27 is respectfully requested.

Section 102 Rejection

Claims 23, 25-27, 29, 31 and 33-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,661,065 to Kunikiyo (hereinafter referred to as "Kunikiyo"). In addition, claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,114,734 to Eklund (hereinafter referred to as "Eklund"). As noted above, claims 31 and 33-36 have been canceled rendering rejection thereto moot.

Kunikiyo is not available as prior art against claims 23-30. To expedite prosecution, a declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 131 is filed with this response. The declaration establishes an invention date prior to February 13, 2001 for the subject matter of claim 23. Because Hallbjorner was filed on February 13, 2001, it is not available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) against claim 23, nor any dependent claims thereto including claims 24-30. Accordingly, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Section 103 Rejection

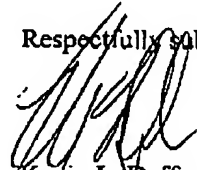
Claims 23-27 and 29-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eklund in view of Kunikiyo. As noted above, claims 31-37 have been canceled rendering rejection thereto moot. In addition, since Kunikiyo is not available as prior art against claim 23, no reference can be cited with Kunikiyo to teach the limitations of claim 23 or any claims dependent therefrom. Accordingly, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

This response constitutes a complete response to the issues raised in the final Office Action mailed March 22, 2005. In view of the remarks traversing the rejections, Applicants assert that pending claims 17, 18, and 20-30 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, comments, or suggestions, the undersigned attorney earnestly requests a telephone conference.

No fees are required for filing this amendment; however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Daffer McDaniel LLP Deposit Account No. 50-3268/5298-08101.

Respectfully submitted,



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